

IN THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-9 (Canceled)

10. (Previously presented) A method for transmitting digital data in an additional channel of a cable television system applying time division multiple access in which slots of a defined slot length are assigned for terminal equipment in order to distribute the use of data transmission capacity to the equipment, and the use of slots in the cable TV system are controlled by use indications transmitted downstream, characterized in that the slots are further divided into mini slots, the use of which is controlled by the indications transmitted downstream, wherein the length of three mini slots plus a guard byte is the same as the defined slot length.

Claims 11-16 (Canceled)

17. (Currently Amended) A method for transmitting digital data in an additional channel of a cable television system applying time division multiple access in which slots of a defined slot length are assigned for terminal equipment in order to distribute the use of data transmission capacity to the equipment, and the use of slots in the cable TV system are controlled by use indications transmitted downstream, which slots are further divided into mini slots, the use of which is controlled by the indications transmitted downstream, wherein

mini slots are used for the transmission of reservation messages which the terminal equipment use for informing a central configuration that the terminal equipment wish to reserve data transmission ~~capaeity~~capacity, and

the indications transmitted downstream are located in control bytes of at least two slot pairs of a downstream frame and comprise at least indicator flag bits, an upstream transmission permit field and one of the following: a

collision feedback information field, an operations, administration and maintenance data field.

18. (Currently Amended) A central configuration of a cable television system, the central configuration having a receiver for receiving data from terminal equipment of the cable television system in accordance with a time division multiple access principle in which slots of a defined slot length are assigned for terminal equipment in order to distribute use of data transmission capacity to the terminal equipment, and the central configuration having a control for controlling use of slots in the cable television system by transmitting indications downstream, the slots being further divided into mini slots, the control for controlling use of mini slots by transmitting indications downstream,

wherein the central configuration has a receiver for receiving from the terminal equipment reservation messages which the terminal equipment use for informing the central configuration that the terminal equipment wish to reserve data transmission ~~capacity~~, and wherein the control is arranged to transmit indications downstream in control bytes of at least two slot pairs of a downstream frame, and to include in said indications at least indicator flag bits, an upstream transmission permit field and one of the following: a collision feedback information field, an operations, administration and maintenance data field.

19. (Currently Amended) Terminal equipment of a cable television system, the terminal equipment having a transmitter for transmitting data to a central configuration of the cable television system in accordance with a time division multiple access principle in which slots of a defined slot length are assigned for terminal equipment in order to distribute use of data transmission capacity to the terminal equipment, and the terminal equipment being adapted to accept control of use of slots in the cable television system by indications transmitted downstream and received by a receiver of said

terminal equipment, the slots being further divided into mini slots, and the terminal equipment being adapted to accept control of use of mini slots by indications transmitted downstream and received by said receiver,

wherein the transmitter of the terminal equipment is for transmitting to the central configuration reservation messages which the terminal equipment uses for informing the central configuration that the terminal equipment wishes to reserve data transmission ~~capacity~~capacity, and

the terminal equipment is arranged to receive indications transmitted downstream in control bytes of at least two slot pairs of a downstream frame and to read from said indications at least indicator flag bits, an upstream transmission permit field and one of the following: a collision feedback information field, an operations, administration and maintenance data field.

20. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 17, wherein said mini slots each include a unique word [(120)] and a payload [(121)] containing a reservation message.

21. (Currently Amended) The central configuration of claim 18, wherein said mini slots each include a unique word [(120)] and a payload [(121)] containing a reservation message.

22. (Currently Amended) The terminal equipment of claim 19, wherein said mini slots each include a unique word [(120)] and a payload [(121)] containing a reservation message.

23. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 20, wherein said mini slots are of a contentionless type.

24. (Previously Presented) The central configuration of claim 21, wherein said mini slots are of a contentionless type.

25. (Previously Presented) The terminal equipment of claim 22, wherein said mini slots are of a contentionless type.

26. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 17, wherein said mini slots are of a contentionless type.

27. (Previously Presented) The central configuration of claim 18, wherein said mini slots are of a contentionless type.

28. (Previously Presented) The terminal equipment of claim 19, wherein said mini slots are of a contentionless type.